

IV. The Civil War (1861-65)

A. Secession and War

1. President Lincoln asked the states to provide soldiers for an army to invade the seceded states and force them to stay in the Union.
2. Although slavery was permitted in Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, and Maryland, these states chose not to leave the Union. Also, the western portion of Virginia decided to split from the state and become West Virginia.
3. The armies of the two sides first met in battle at the First Battle of Bull Run. The Confederates, or “the South,” was able to win this and other battles because of better leaders until great northern generals arose who could win the war.

B. The Eastern and Western Theaters of War

1. The Confederacy decided on Richmond, VA as its capital. This is only a hundred miles from Washington. The area between the two capitals became the “Eastern Theater” of the war.
2. The North (or “the Union”) decided to try to divide the Confederate states by taking over rivers and railroads in the “Western Theater” of the war (the Mississippi River and neighboring states).
3. In early July of 1863, Generals Ulysses S. Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman succeeded in capturing Vicksburg, MS. This allowed the Union to control the entire Mississippi River.
4. Due to this success, Grant was put in charge of all Union armies, and Sherman was put in charge of the Union armies in the South.
4. Meanwhile, the South's greatest general, Robert E. Lee, had invaded the North but he lost the Battle of Gettysburg (the largest of the war) in Pennsylvania.
5. Later that year, in a ceremony at the Gettysburg cemetery, President Lincoln gave a speech known as “The Gettysburg Address.” In it he explained that the Civil War would prove whether or not a government “of the people, by the people, for the people” could survive.

C. The Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863)

1. On January 1, 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation, which said, *"all persons held as slaves within any State...the people whereof shall be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."*
2. This did not free all the slaves in America. It punished the states that had seceded.

D. The End of the War

1. General Sherman completely destroyed the city of Atlanta. This prevented supplies from reaching the Confederates in Virginia, and made them worry about their families.
2. From Atlanta, Sherman's army marched to Savannah. During this “March to the Sea”, Sherman destroyed everything in his path.
3. As Sherman devastated the South, Grant gradually surrounded Richmond. Lee fled, but surrendered at Appomatox Court House on April 9, 1865.
4. The war was over, but just five days later, Abraham Lincoln was shot and killed by a Southerner, John Wilkes Booth, while attending a play. The nation would have to be rebuilt without the president who had led the cause of Union through the war.

V. Reconstruction (1865-77)

A. The Proclamation of Reconstruction

1. Late in 1863, when some of the Southern states had already been conquered by the Union, Abraham Lincoln began to work on putting the country back together again.
2. He offered amnesty (forgiveness and freedom from punishment) to Southerners as long as they swore loyalty to the Constitution and abolished slavery in their states. Sadly, they refused the bargain.

B. The Thirteenth Amendment

1. Although Lincoln was assassinated before it was completed, he supported the final solution to abolishing slavery: the Thirteenth Amendment.
2. Two thirds of the states accepted it in the Senate, and it eventually became a part of the Constitution. (The slave states were not part of the government yet.)

C. Reaction and Punishment

1. Former slave owners created new laws to try to keep freed slaves under control. These laws known as “Black Codes” said that all former slaves had to have a job, or the government could force them to work. This was a new kind of slavery!
2. In response to the “Black Codes” the Federal government created the Freedman's Bureau which worked to give freed slaves food and 40 acres of land each so they could support themselves.
3. The government also created the Fourteenth Amendment, which said that all former slaves were citizens, and thus were protected by the laws of the United States like everyone else.

D. Military Rule over the South

1. When some southern states refused to accept the Fourteenth Amendment, Northerners decide to force southerners to create new ones using the army.
2. The army supervised the creation of new state governments, which all had to accept the Fourteenth Amendment and allow black people to vote.
3. Since slaves were kept uneducated by their masters, it would be easy for others to control them even though they were free. A secret group of criminals called the Ku Klux Klan was formed by Southern white people to attack black people and make them afraid of voting.

E. The Fifteenth Amendment

1. To complete the transformation of former black slaves into free American citizens, the federal government passed the Fifteenth Amendment. It said that all citizens had the right to vote.
2. The government then used the police to break up the KKK.
3. Although the feeling of Union had certainly not returned, southern governments had been remade in a manner that basically protected the rights of former slaves.
4. Reconstruction was completed by the withdrawal of the army from the South in 1877.